

STATEMENT OF

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I believe that the Democratic platform must recognize present realities and then meet the issues of the future. Any less would be a disservice to the nation and evidence of a failure to understand the vast and complex forces of change at work in our society. In my opinion, the American people do not want politics as usual and business as usual. They sense what is happening and many are frightened by what they see, but leadership and commitment to meaningful purpose is the primary need today. The party that articulates this need and convinces the nation that the future can be met and understood will, I believe, prevail in November.

It seems to me that, in a profound social sense, we are at the threshold of a revolution. Race, poverty, urban deterioration; basically the plight of the disadvantaged, have become the paramount issues of the future. These forces have coalesced in such a manner that they will be the major concern in the 1970s here and throughout the world.

Although violence and riots are not new in American society, we are deluding ourselves if we do not view them as saying something very significant about the world we live in. Whether we like it or not, understand it or not, this is a period of vast social upheaval. Either society adjusts or it will change in such a manner that it will be unrecognizable as the democracy we know.

Change is the fundamental condition today. It has, in a relatively short period of years, remade the maps of Africa and Asia; seen colonialism die, presided over the birth and the beginnings of the demise of the cold war, and now the onset of the economic war between the haves and the have nots. In that same period of time, the United States has not only become an urban society, but, by the forces of internal migration, the racial composition of our cities and suburbs

has been radically altered. In 1910 there were few blacks in the cities of America; in 1950, 6 million; in 1965, 12.5 million; and population projections indicate 21 million by 1985. Between 1950 and 1965, approximately 500,000 blacks a year have moved into central cities while the overwhelming majority of whites have moved from central cities to the suburbs. Thus, population growth and movement, coupled with technology and instant communications, has produced in 1968 in the United States a population of great affluence, of high education, and yet, at the same time, a population with 30 million people very poor, 10 million barely subsisting, racial prejudice, and festering slums.

Today concerned citizens, young, black, and poor people are asking questions which we must resolve. Why hunger with affluence, why slums with a highly technological society, why discrimination or racism 100 years after the Civil War, why an educational system like Newark, New Jersey, where over one-half who graduate from secondary school are illiterate, when the knowledge exists to put a man on the moon. Furthermore, why so much insensitivity and mediocrity in public affairs when it is clear that in the latter part of the twentieth century the problems in the public sector are so complex that only the best is tolerable. And, uppermost in most minds, the question of what does it take to motivate and move the leadership in the country.

The list is endless, the failure to answer inexcusable; but even worse is the inability to recognize the relevance of these haunting questions. These questions herald the crises, and the institutionalization of change thus becomes the primary concern of society. A failure to understand the relevance of this national challenge only can lead to further confrontation and conflict.

There are two approaches I would like to stress at this time. First, it is

clear to me that to eradicate poverty/ halt urban deterioration will require expenditures by government on a scale not yet visible or planned. Substantive programs to change the physical environment and the conditions under which the disadvantaged in our society live are an absolute necessity. Education, housing, health, recreation facilities must be improved and, in many cases, completely rebuilt. No matter what other measures society will adopt to channel the conflict, the ghettos will have to be physically changed.

This country saved Western Europe after World War II. Twenty-four billion dollars were spent between 1946 and the late 1950s in supporting and sustaining the rebirth of Europe. I do not suggest that it was not in our national interest to do this. But I do suggest it is indicative of what the American people can do if sufficiently aroused and motivated.

If the educational system cannot bring its pupils into the twenty-first century when automation, technology and science will rule supreme, then the problems of unemployment and despair are only going to be magnified in the years ahead. For example, a city like Newark, New Jersey, with a population of approximately 400,000 people, has 60 to 70 per cent of its school buildings over 50 years old, was 10,000 pupil stations short in September of 1967, and had an attainment level 2.2 grades below the national average in the sixth grade. With these inadequate education conditions, Newark must obviously have a massive program to prevent disaster.

In rebuilding our cities we should stress home ownership. Home ownership gives a man pride in himself, a stake in the future, and responsibility in the community. A federal authority for poor people, similar to what we have today for middle-income America, could facilitate vast improvements in urban housing condi-

tions.

Concomitant with the above is the necessity to create real jobs. There is no substitute for meaningful and productive work, and as a society, we must plan towards that end. I believe that jobs can be created by a huge extension and development of the services industries and the massive rebuilding of the physical environment. Although federal funds are imperative for the rebuilding, the training should primarily be left to private enterprise with a system of tax incentives or outright subsidies. Private enterprise has both the facilities to train and, most important, the jobs at the end of the training period.

There have been years of mechanization and automation with resulting mass migration of the population but no job or social planning on a national scale. Should we not plan for the results of automation and provide training and opportunities and social help for families that are dispossessed by mechanization? How fair is it for a society to allow a man to lose his work by automation and put him on the road to another city with little or no training or ability to meet the problems he will face in that city? And how realistic is it to require a city to support those on welfare when they are there because the society wants to reap the benefits of automation and mechanization?

I know of no serious long range national planning to meet the problem of mechanization and automation. We must have a commitment and a plan from the national government to provide training, relocation aid, and jobs for people who lose their livelihood because of mechanization. We cannot and should not tolerate the human misery that comes from mass migration without social planning. The federal government must provide tax incentives, not only for industry which locates in the urban ghetto, but also for industry which locates in the depressed areas

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of rural Mississippi and West Virginia.

Secondly, I am of the opinion that we must recognize that substantive programs are not in themselves sufficient to meet the crises of today. People have to believe that by working through the political and governmental system, it is possible to achieve significant social progress. This requires that the system be sensitive and responsive to the needs and aspirations of those seeking equality and even-handed treatment. Confidence in the political processes and its administration go hand in hand with the ability of a society to channel confrontation into worthwhile ends.

In my view the platform must convince the people that the Democratic Party recognizes the urgent need for a sensitive and responsive government. If people believe their government is unresponsive, then the trend of alienation and frustration will continue to grow.

Furthermore, the platform should recognize the legitimate aspirations of the black community and other groups to aspire to and have meaningful political power. There is a feeling of Negro powerlessness and we should support the emergence of more Negro candidates and encourage the active participation of Negroes of all economic levels in the political process. With increased political participation from within our minority communities and new economic directions from the federal government, we can halt the spreading attitude of hopeless anxiety which is beginning to undermine confidence in our national political institutions.